



Service Priorities and Programmes

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Implementation of NICU Nurse Residency Program Reduces Stress Level of Novice and Maintain Stable Workforce

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Introduction

Neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) is a highly stressful environment as nurses have to respond quickly and appropriately to sudden occurrence of stressful events like patient deterioration. Besides there is small margin for safety in neonates, inappropriate clinical judgment and failure to intervene timely is detrimental. In order to reduce nurses' stress and ensure patient safety, a two-year residency program was developed and implemented.

Objectives

The aims of this project are to examine: (1) effectiveness of the program in reducing new NICU nurses' stress. (2) new nurses' and the preceptors' perceptions on the program.

Methodology

The program was conducted in a local neonatal unit where Level II and III neonatal care was provided. Multi-faceted training strategies including lectures, clinical rounds, scenario-based simulation, reflection and case sharing was employed to strengthen nurses' partnership, communication skills, critical thinking and safe practice. Twenty-eight NICU novice nurses who joined the program and twenty preceptors were recruited in the evaluation. It is a repeated measures design. At the beginning, one year and on completion of the program, a questionnaire was distributed to all NICU novices and their source and level of stress were surveyed. Feedback from all NICU novices and twenty preceptors on the training program was also surveyed.

Result

1. At the end of the program, there was significant: a. Increase in new nurses' confidence in managing the assignment (increased 181.82%). b. Stress level reduction by 48.89% when they worked with colleagues and communicated with parents. c. Increase in confidence (three-fold increase) in delivery of safe patient

care. d. Increase in willingness to stay in the unit (increased 71.43%). 2. 80% of preceptors perceived the program to be beneficial to new nurses. The result was congruent with that obtained from NICU novice. 85% recommended continuation of the captioned program for subsequent intake of new nurses.